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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/825,717	04/04/2001	Richard W. Stoakley	MFCP.76395	3160

45809 7590 05/06/2005

SHOOK, HARDY & BACON L.L.P.
2555 GRAND BOULEVARD
KANSAS CITY, MO 64108-2613

EXAMINER	
ZHOU, TING	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2173	

DATE MAILED: 05/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/825,717	STOAKLEY ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ting Zhou	2173	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *07 March 2005*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,2 and 4-21* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-2 and 4-21* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. The Request for Continued Examination (RCE) filed on 7 March 2005 under 37 CFR 1.53(d) based on parent Application No. 09/825,717 is acceptable and a RCE has been established. An action on the RCE follows.

2. The amendments filed on 7 March 2005, submitted with the filing of the RCE have been received and entered. Claims 1-2 and 4-21 as amended are pending in the application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

3. Claims 1-2 and 4-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Moon et al. U.S. Patent 6,385,662.

Referring to claim 1, Moon et al. teach a method in a computer system for organizing and displaying notification items associated with corresponding notifications on a display (icons and application launch buttons associated with the system applications, displayed on the status bar, as shown by reference character "115" in Figure 1) having a notification area (status bar shown by reference character "121" in Figure 1) (column 4, lines 17-22 and 56-60) comprising identifying an item associated with a notification area icon, wherein the notification area icon represents a particular instance of an event or process (for example, if an email message arrives, a notification icon identifying the email application is sent to the status bar, the notification icon representing a particular instance, i.e. email application, of an event or process, i.e. notification request) (column 4, lines 20-30 and 56-60) and monitoring an interval of time associated with an activity of the item (monitoring whether the user has selected the message icon within a fixed time period) (column 4, line 49 – column 5, line 13), hiding the notification area icon from view after a predetermined interval of time (if the user has not selected the message icon after a fixed time period, the message icon is hidden, or disappears) (column 4, line 49 – column 5, line 13), and upon meeting an unhide criteria, redisplaying the notification area icon in the notification area, wherein the redisplayed notification area icon represents the particular instance of the event or process (if the system receives an event from the same application that has a previously hidden message, the message icon will be revealed, or redisplayed on the status bar; for example, if there is an incoming email message, the email message icon can be sent to the status area; upon the user ignoring the message icon, the message icon is hidden, or disappears from the status

area; however, if the system receives another incoming email, the email message icon will be displayed on the status area again) (column 3, lines 10-13, column 4, lines 29-31 and column 4, line 49 – column 5, line 13; this can further be seen from Figures 2 and 4).

Referring to claim 2, Moon et al. teach arranging the notification area items (message icons) in the order in which the notifications occur (as more notifications are received, they are each displayed on the status bar) (column 3, lines 10-13 and column 4, lines 17-22).

Referring to claim 4, Moon et al. teach determining the occurrence of activity on the monitored and hidden item, and revealing the item by redisplaying the item upon the occurrence of activity. When the system receives an event, notification of that event is displayed on the status bar (for example, if there is an incoming email message, a message icon can be sent to the status area) (column 3, lines 10-13 and column 4, lines 29-31 and 56-60); therefore, if the system receives an event from the same application that has a previously hidden message, the message icon will be revealed, or redisplayed on the status bar). Also, if the user selects the history icon, then the message icons are redisplayed on an history event log and can further be selected by the user, as recited in column 5, lines 39-50

Referring to claim 5, Moon et al. teach revealing the icons in order of the most recently active application through display of the notification icons that has the most recent level of activity. When the user selects the history icon, a history file showing an event log of hidden messages are displayed with information such as time, date, etc. (column 5, lines 39-50); therefore, the user can respond to the event messages according to the most recently active application, or the most recent event message.

Referring to claim 6, Moon et al. teach a computer-readable storage medium containing computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 1 (personal communication assistant "PCA), as recited in column 1, lines 6-15.

Referring to claim 7, Moon et al. teach a computer system having a processor, memory, and an operating environment, the computer system operable to execute the method recited in claim 1 (personal communication assistant "PCA), as recited in column 1, lines 6-15.

Referring to claim 8, Moon et al. teach a method comprising hiding inactive notification item icons that meet a preset threshold of inactivity (if the user does not select an event, or message icon in the history file, the history file is hidden to allow the user to return to the current application, thereby hiding each message representing event notifications in the history file), retrieving a chevron icon (displaying a history icon), and upon meeting an unhide criteria, displaying and arranging each of the notification items in the notification area and removing the chevron icon when there are no more hidden items (once the user decides to respond to the event by selecting the history, or chevron icon, the history file is displayed again, thereby displaying the messages representing event notifications in the history file for user selection, and removing the history icon once the user's response is complete, i.e., there are no more messages in the history file) (column 4, line 49 - column 5, line 4 and column 5, lines 39-50), wherein displaying and arranging each of the notification item icons includes displaying the inactive notification item icons in the notification area along with active notification item icons (when users select the history icon, the history file with messages representing event notifications are displayed, the displayed messages include active and inactive messages, i.e. newly added event messages and

messages that was previously in the history file) (column 4, line 49 - column 5, line 4 and column 5, lines 39-50). This can further be seen from Figures 2 and 4.

Referring to claim 9, Moon et al. teach receiving a chevron entry selection signal indicative of user selection of the chevron icon, and in response to the chevron selection signal, displaying each of the hidden notification items on the display (receiving user selection of the history icon and displaying the hidden history file and consequently the messages representing event notifications within the history file) (column 4, lines 39-50).

Referring to claim 10, Moon et al. teach the unhide criteria being met when an entry selection signal indicative of a user selection of the notification item icon is selected by the user from the displayed, previously hidden icons (when the user selects the history icon, therefore satisfying an unhide criteria, the previously hidden history file and consequently the messages representing event notifications within the history file, are displayed to the user) (column 4, lines 39-50).

Referring to claim 11, Moon et al. teach displaying the notification item icon in the notification area on the display in response to the selection (displaying the history file and consequently the messages representing event notifications within the history file, upon user selection of the history icon) (column 4, lines 39-50).

Referring to claim 12, Moon et al. teach the notification item icon is placed to the far left of the notification area (the message or notification display area represented by character 121 is on the left hand side of the notification area, or status bar represented by reference character 120).

Referring to claim 13, Moon et al. teach a computer-readable storage medium containing computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 8 (personal communication assistant "PCA), as recited in column 1, lines 6-15.

Referring to claim 14, Moon et al. teach a computer system having a processor, memory, and an operating environment, the computer system operable to execute the method recited in claim 8 (personal communication assistant "PCA), as recited in column 1, lines 6-15.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 15-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oran et al. U.S. Patent 5,757,371 and Moon et al. U.S. Patent 6,385,662.

Referring to claim 15, Oran et al. teach a system having a graphical user interface including a display (Oran et al.: column 1, line 66 - column 2, line 1) and a method of providing and selecting options for configuring notification items within a notification area (Oran et al.: column 3, lines 1-11). This can further be seen from Figure 14. Specifically, Oran et al. teach a method comprising retrieving a notification item, wherein the notification item corresponds to an item displayed in the notification area (the sub-elements, or visual indicators on the taskbar of the active windows), displaying the notification item icon (visual indicators representing

notification items, such as "Start", shown by reference character 32, "Microsoft Mail", shown by reference character 40, and the clock, shown by reference character 34 in Figure 7), a description associated with the notification (for example, the clock shown by reference character 34 in Figure 7 displays a description associated with the clock notification, i.e., the actual time) and a hiding behavior characteristic to be associated with the notification item (the "Taskbar Properties" configuration box shown in Figures 14 and 20 shows descriptions associated with taskbar items and a hiding behavior, such as "Show Clock" for the clock notification item or "Auto Hide" for each and every element on the taskbar) (Oran et al.: column 8, lines 52-67 and column 9, lines 10-12); providing a set of user selectable hiding behaviors to be associated with the notification item (as shown in Figure 15B, user selectable hiding behaviors associated with notification items on the taskbar can be selected by the user, such as automatically hiding a notification item, via hiding the taskbar, or hiding the clock) (Oran et al.: column 8, lines 52-67 and column 9, lines 10-12); and repeating the retrieving and displaying step for each of the items that are added to the notification area up to a predetermined maximum number (each of the notifications on the taskbar, such as those represented by reference characters 32, 34 and 40 in Figure 7 displays the icon on the status bar, a description, or name/time representing the icon on the status bar and a hiding characteristic, represented by the "Show Clock" or "Auto Hide" properties that can be set through the "Taskbar Properties" configuration box; furthermore, at most, the taskbar can only occupy half of the graphical user interface, therefore, there is a maximum number of items that can be added to the taskbar) (Oran et al.: column 7, lines 43-45). However, although Oran et al. teach user selectable hiding behaviors, Oran et al. fail to explicitly teach at least one of the user selectable hiding behaviors includes hiding the notification item

icon when a preset threshold of inactivity is met. Moon et al. teach an interface that displays notification item icons associated with corresponding notifications on a notification area of a display (status bar shown by reference character "121" in Figure 1) (Moon et al.: column 4, lines 17-22 and 56-60) similar to that of Oran et al. In addition, Moon et al. further teach hiding the notification item icon when a preset threshold of inactivity is met (if the user has not selected the message icon after a fixed time period, the message icon is hidden, or disappears) (Moon et al.: column 4, line 49 – column 5, line 13). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Oran et al. and Moon et al. before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the user selectable hiding behaviors of Oran et al. to include the hiding behaviors of hiding the notification item icon when a preset threshold of inactivity is met, taught by Moon et al. One would have been motivated to make such a combination in order to be able to display more information on a portable device with a limited display area, such a personal communication assistants (PCA); furthermore, it provides users with the option and flexibility of postponing response and/or action to an event until a more convenient time.

Referring to claim 16, Oran et al. teach a selection signal indicative of a user selection of a choice of behavior for a notification item (check mark next to behavior), shown in Figure 14.

Referring to claim 17, Oran et al. teach a method to reset the behavior associated with each notification item to a default state (the start menu has a default behavior of containing certain menu items; also, the "Taskbar Properties" box has a default value when first displayed, for example, no items checked), as recited in column 9, lines 44-45 and column 10, lines 21-23.

Referring to claim 18, Oran et al. teach display of the notification icon, description and behavior on the display includes displaying the item in an order associated with the appearance

of the item in the notification area (users can click on each of the notification item icons in the order in which it appears, thereby displaying the notification items in the order it appears in the notification area), as shown by Figure 8.

Referring to claim 19, Oran et al. teach a predetermined maximum upon which no more items can be added (at most, the taskbar can only occupy half of the graphical user interface, therefore, there is a maximum number of items that can be added to the taskbar) (column 7, lines 43-45). Therefore, if more items are to be added, it would be obvious to replace the oldest items first, in order to allow users to keep the most up to date items in the display area, giving users access to items they are more likely to use.

Referring to claim 20, Oran et al. teach a computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 15, as recited in column 5, lines 18-27.

Referring to claim 21, Oran et al. teach a computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating environment, the computer system operable to execute the method recited in claim 15, as recited in column 5, lines 18-27.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 7 March 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive:

6. As a first note, the applicants have amended claims 1, 8 and 15 with the addition of numerous wherein clause limitations. The Examiner notes that claim language such as

"wherein" merely suggest limitations or makes limitations optional. In using claim language such as "wherein", the applicant has not required steps to be performed or limited an apparatus to a particular structure (see MPEP 2106).

7. With respect to claim 1, the applicant argues that Moon does not redisplay an icon representing a particular instance of the event or process, and more specifically, Moon does not teach redisplaying a message icon representing the original incoming email instance. The examiner respectfully disagrees. Although the limitations the applicant asserts are lacking in Moon are wherein clauses that merely suggests the limitations or makes the limitations optional, as noted above, for the sake of argument, the examiner will respond to the applicant's arguments with respect to claim 1. Moon teaches displaying a message icon representing an incoming email for example; the message icon represents a notification request from the email application, which is an instance of a notification event; when the system receives another incoming email, the email message icon will be redisplayed on the status area again, the email message icon again representing the same instance of a notification request, namely that the notification request event is from an email application, as recited in column 3, lines 10-13, column 4, lines 29-31 and column 4, line 49 – column 5, line 13, and further shown in Figures 2 and 4. Therefore, the instance of an event or process, is that of a plurality of possible requests from a plurality of applications, the request is from an email application, and not the message itself.

8. With respect to claim 8, the applicant argues that Moon only teaches displaying a history file which includes details about inactive notifications and does not teach redisplaying the

inactive notification item icons along with active notification item icons in the notification area. The examiner respectfully disagrees. Moon teaches that when an event notification occurs and a message icon is displayed and ignored by the user, the active, or current event message is placed in a history file comprising messages representing event notifications; when the user selects the history icon corresponding to the history file, the message are displayed, the displayed messages include active, or the current message that was just placed into the history file and inactive messages, i.e. messages that was previously in the history file, as recited in column 4, line 49 - column 5, line 4 and column 5, lines 39-50. Therefore, inactive notification items are displayed along with active notification items.

9. With respect to claim 15, the applicant argues that Oran teaches hiding the entire taskbar instead of hiding an individual notification item icon, and therefore does not teach providing a set of user selectable hiding behaviors to be associated with an individual notification item. The examiner respectfully disagrees. When the entire taskbar is hidden, the individual notification items on the taskbar are correspondingly hidden. Users can select hiding behaviors for individual notification items via selecting hiding behaviors for the taskbar, such as selecting "Auto hide", shown in Figure 15B. Since the individual notification items are displayed on the taskbar, the hiding behavior of the taskbar is correspondingly the hiding behavior of the individual notification items. Therefore, the user selectable set of hiding behaviors, such as "Auto hide" are associated with an individual notification item, such as any one of the notification items on the taskbar.

10. Applicant's arguments with respect to Oran et al. failing to teach "wherein at least one of said user selectable hiding behaviors includes hiding the notification item icon when a preset threshold of inactivity is met" of claim 15 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection, i.e. Oran et al. and Moon et al.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ting Zhou whose telephone number is (571) 272-4058. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 7:00 am - 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Cabeca can be reached at (571) 272-4048. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-4058.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

TZ

RAYMOND J. BAYERL
PRIMARY EXAMINER
ART UNIT 2173